

King County Mobility Coalition

MINUTES

Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 9:00 to 11:00 a.m.
Kent City Hall, 220 4th Ave S, Council Chambers East

In attendance

Members/Alternates: Gaby Bell, Jim Blanchard, Francois Larrivee, Ref Lindmark (co-chair), Scott Ninneman, Alex O'Reilly (co-chair), Eileen Rasnack, Ruben Rivera-Jackman, Edith Savadove, Allison Scott, George Smith, Dinah Wilson.

Collaborators: Alina Aaron, Jason Beloso, Jo Cavinta, Alunya Clark, Becky Edmonds, Christine Gifford, Ankita Gupta, Shelly Hawkins, Mike Heinisch, Ron Higashi, Zach Munsey, Sheila Sloan-Evans.

Staff: Michelle Zeidman.

Welcome, Introductions & Brief Announcements

Everyone introduced themselves, including the following new collaborators:

New Introductions:

- Jason Beloso is the new urban special needs planner at WSDOT.
- Jo Cavinta is the diversity program coordinator at the King County Library System.
- Alunya Clark is the new project specialist at Hopelink.
- Becky Edmonds is a University of Washington Evans School of Public Affairs student who led a South King County transportation needs assessment.
- Christine Gifford is with member services at the Auburn YMCA.
- Ron Higashi is the transportation director at Nikkei Concerns.
- Zach Munsey is the new program coordinator at Hopelink.

Announcements:

- Shelly Hawkins is now a Master PASS (passenger service and safety) trainer.
- Jim Blanchard announced that Auburn Youth Resources is hosting a hamburger fry and outreach event at the Kent City Hall on 5/16 from 5-8 pm. He said that many homeless youth in South King County are invisible, as many couch surf, and that they were using the outreach event to document the number of homeless youth.
- Christine Gifford shared that older adults have transportation challenges in reaching the SuperMall in Auburn, as many cannot drive.
- Gaby noted that Senior Services' Federal Way Hyde Shuttle will be starting May 21.
- Alina Aaron announced that there is new DART service in Enumclaw.

Consent Calendar

February 21, 2012 Meeting Minutes: the Coalition approved the meeting minutes with one edit from Gaby Bell.

Legislative Session Recap

Ref Lindmark began the legislative session recap by speaking about the general fund and transportation state budgets, noting that paratransit state money remained intact. He also

provided an overview of proposed changes in federal funding of transportation, explaining that the US House of Representatives' new budget is road heavy, with cuts to bike, pedestrian, and transit programs. The US Senate's budget is friendlier to transit programs. Now the House and Senate are trying to reconcile the two bills. Ref explained that potential cuts to transit may affect large agencies, such as Metro, by reducing funding for bus replacements and route upgrades. Ref also noted that state and federal cuts in human service programs, such as job training for low-income individuals, have reduced demand for the transportation services typically funded with Jobs Access Reverse Commute (JARC) dollars.

Alex O'Reilly noted that Eastside Human Services Forum drafted a legislative recap report. She shared that state funding for seniors will remain largely intact, including funding for Area Agencies on Aging, Senior Citizens Services Act, homecare worker training, and Medicaid-funded long-term care. Alex also noted that funding for 2-1-1 has been maintained.

Shelly Hawkins spoke about paratransit training, and shared that while other states fund Medicaid drivers to go through PASS training, they are only funded for one day, though the typical training is two days. Washington State funding for PASS training has remained intact.

Francois Larrivee noted that cities' Capital Improvement Plans (CIP) are underfunded and under pressure to delay bike, pedestrian, and ADA improvements. Alex O'Reilly explained that some cities are focusing on transportation improvements without a monetary cost, like working with traffic programmers to lengthen crossing times for pedestrians.

Jason Beloso shared that WSDOT fared better than expected in the budget, losing only a couple million dollars. He noted that the staffing needed to implement megaprojects is in decline, 800 employees will be laid off and this funding will be available for other programs. WSDOT is now a cabinet level agency and that the governor of Washington will play a larger role in it, making the upcoming governor election important for WSDOT.

Ron Higashi shared that funding for assisted care was reduced a little, but overall the state budget was favorable for Nikkei's aging services and nursing facilities.

Ref reminded the group that the \$20 congestion-reduction charge car tabs for King County will help keep transit service on the streets for the next two years. For the long-term, Metro will need additional funds (or funding authority) from the state or federal level to preserve service.

Grant Partnerships

Michelle Zeidman began the discussion on grant partnerships by explaining that there were two types of federal funds available from the PSRC: Jobs Access and Reverse Commute (JARC) and New Freedom. She shared the following (tentative) grant application timeline:

WSDOT Application Available	Week of August 6, 2012
PSRC Supplemental Application Available	Week of August 6, 2012
WSDOT and PSRC Grant Trainings*	August 2012
Applications Due	September 28, 2012

Francois Larrivee recommended that potential grantees attend WSDOT's trainings, as it is a great opportunity to ask in-kind match and technical questions.

Michelle then asked grantees from the previous round to share their plans for the next grant cycle. *(See handout for list of grant awards from the FY2011-2013 grant cycle.)* All grantees in attendance shared that they plan to reapply for funding.

Ref Lindmark spoke about King County's Jobs Access Transportation Program, and explained that there were three programs within the overall program: (1) a vanpool subsidy program that partners with employers to provide rides for low-wage employees; (2) In Motion, a program that helps describe travel options in low income neighborhoods; and (3) adapting [Rideshare Online](#) for ESL communities, communities of color, and social service agencies.

Ref also spoke about the need to provide ORCA card training, which spawned a discussion on ORCA card practices. Francois Larrivee mentioned that there is a cultural shift involved in using ORCA cards, and that there was a challenge with Medicaid clients losing the cards. Christine Gifford noted that it takes 24 hours for money loaded onto an ORCA card to become active, and that there is also a fear of identity theft when using ORCA cards. Shelly Hawkins explained that there are no ORCA card readers on Access buses, which causes confusion among riders. Alina Aaron spoke about ORCA card's impact on low-income communities, where riders cannot afford the base cost of the card.

Allison Scott explained that the Maple Valley Community Center's shuttle service was at capacity within its first quarter of operations and needs additional funding for another vehicle within their existing service area. Michelle Zeidman mentioned the possibility of a joint vehicle procurement grant proposal to purchase vehicles for multiple nonprofits through a single grant, as Hopelink has done in past years.

Gaby Bell asked about wheelchair accessible vanpools for people with temporary disabilities, and Ref noted that while some exist they are limited. This could be a new project proposal. Gaby also noted that KCMC's Livable Communities Committee is considering a project to fill the gap in patient transportation for patients pending eligibility for Medicaid or Access (paratransit) transportation. She noted that Harborview has been collecting data on the need for this service.

Sheila Sloan-Evans shared that Project Access (a nonprofit) provides access to medical services for people without insurance, but is unaware of existing transportation options. A partnership with Project Access could be another potential project.

South King County Mobility Coalition (SKCMC) Updates

Mike Heinisch presented the SKCMC Action Plan for April 2012-2013. It focuses on four main areas: (1) understanding existing transportation services in South King County; (2) evaluating transportation websites to improve traveler information; (3) developing a white paper on recommendations based on their South King County needs assessment; and (4) hosting an event next spring to share these recommendations.

Becky Edmonds discussed the findings from her South King County needs assessment. She found that south county residents rely more on cars than other people in King County, though

some do rely on alternate modes of transportation. The main barriers to transportation in south King County were: (1) cost; (2) travel time, especially during non-peak hours; (3) the need for multiple-destination trips (i.e., “trip chaining”); and 4) the difficulty of transporting children, groceries, and laundry via bus. Becky also spoke about the cultural and language barriers that the residents of South King County face. (*See handout for more information*)

Ref Lindmark expressed a desire to have Becky’s input be shared with KCMC members. Alex O’Reilly found Becky’s findings to be similar to east King County, and brought up that Becky’s findings seem universal to our area. Francois Larrivee asked if there was a way to coordinate with other needs assessments in King County; Alex O’Reilly explained that the human services needs assessment for east King County was published in Jan 2012, and that an intern could compile them all. Ref Lindmark suggested we use this information as a basis for updating the regional *Transit-Human Services Coordinated Plan*.

Mike Heinisch agreed with Becky’s finding that cost is a barrier for residents of South King County, especially since the implementation of ORCA which costs \$5 to buy the card. Mike recommended creating a subsidy program for low-income individuals – provide the card for free with \$5 of fare pre-loaded. Mike also noted that workers in Seattle’s downtown Ride Free Zone are voicing their desire for a subsidy program, and that this could be a good time to advocate for a transit subsidy for low-income people.

Sheila Sloan-Evans suggested expanding eligibility for the Reduced Regional Fare Permit (RRFP) to allow people on public assistance or otherwise low-income to get a temporary RRFP (with annual renewal). Ref Lindmark explained that the rules for RRFPs are set regionally and that a rule change would require agreement from all participating transit agencies. Other factors to consider include how low-income status would be determined and how the reduction in fare revenue would affect Metro’s ability to provide services.

Jason Beloso asked Becky if she could split out sub-populations based on willingness to pay for transit. Becky explained that her focus was not on willingness to pay, and the information she received about that was anecdotal only. The American Community Survey data does not have good data for evaluating willingness to pay.

Dinah Wilson spoke of the cultural barrier to transit opportunities for many in south King County. She shared that some people are not willing to ride transit because they do not know the driver. A suggested fix to this would be using vans for groups with a driver from their country. Francois Larrivee suggested this is an opportunity for cultural sensitivity training for drivers.

Eastside Easy Rider Collaborative (EERC) Update

Alina Aaron spoke about EERC’s equity grant project. She reported that the Transit Communities Exchange Forum held on February 29 was a success, and included representatives from Southeast Seattle shared their experiences with the Central Link light rail line. Alina also noted that EERC is hosting five Neighborhood Conversation Cafés to engage residents on barriers to civic engagement, especially concerning transportation.

Alina shared that EERC is compiling a white paper about the impact of funding cuts on Eastside agencies. EERC also plans to collaborate with Metro on distributing the donated transit tickets from the congestion reduction charge to low-income clients.

North King County Mobility Coalition (NKCMC) Update

George Smith shared that Senior Services expanded the Hyde Shuttle to connect Shoreline to North Seattle, and ridership has been good. NKCMC worked with Virginia Mason, Northwest Hospital, Hopelink and the City of Shoreline to post travel information on their websites, including links to the application for a Regional Reduced Fare Permit (RRFP). NKCMC is also looking to expand locations where individuals can initially get an ORCA card.

Ref Lindmark noted that seniors 65+ and students can apply by mail for RRFPs and student cards. The forms are online at www.orcacard.com.

Francois Larrivee suggested working with the King County Library System to conduct outreach for RRFP forms, and to offer travel training for library staff so they can better help clients. Jo Cavinta replied that there are 46 libraries in the area, and that she can make a recommendation to human resources about Francois' idea. Ref Lindmark explained that the Seattle Library had a desktop icon on their computers for librarians to get travel information quickly and easily.

Mobility Manager Update

- Michelle Zeidman introduced Zach Munsey and Alunya Clark as the newest members of the Mobility Management team.
- In March, Michelle presented on behalf of the KCMC at the Aging Your Way Summit, where 250 people learned about our coalition and the immigrant and refugee elders transportation project. A few of today's attendees learned about us at the Summit.
- Cindy Zwart and Michelle also presented at the Aging in America Conference in Washington, DC about the immigrant and refugee elders transportation project, which is national example of engaging culturally diverse elders in transportation.
- Michelle shared that Hopelink applied for a second round of funding under the Veterans Transportation & Community Living initiative. This grant (if funded) will support outreach to veterans.
- Lastly, Michelle noted that she will be working part-time (approximately 3 days/week) during the summer months.

Next Steps

- Next Meeting: **Tuesday, August 21** from 9-11am at **Shoreline City Hall**. Members requested a special briefing from the North King County Mobility Coalition. Jo Cavinta volunteered to present on the King County Library System's Library2Go program.

Agendas, minutes and handouts from past Coalition meeting are available online at:
<http://metro.kingcounty.gov/tops/kccsnt/agendas-minutes.html>